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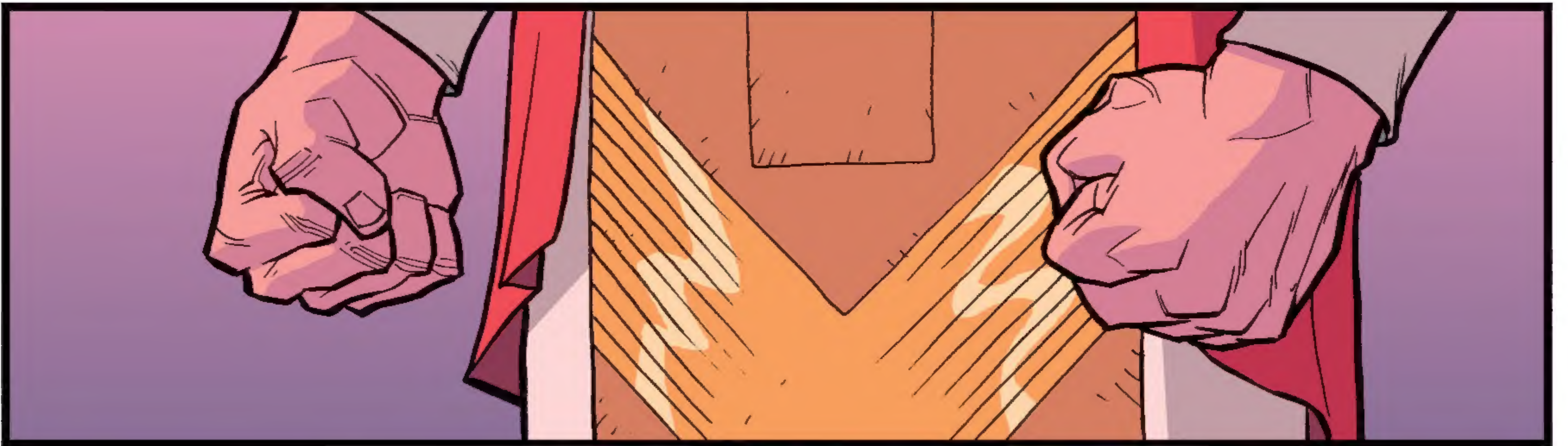
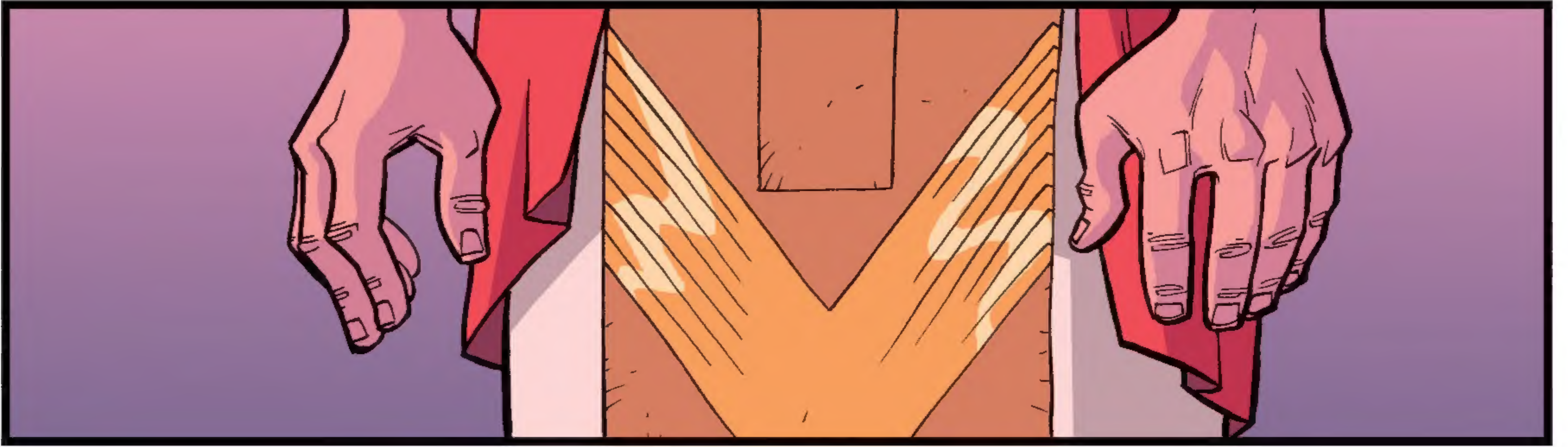
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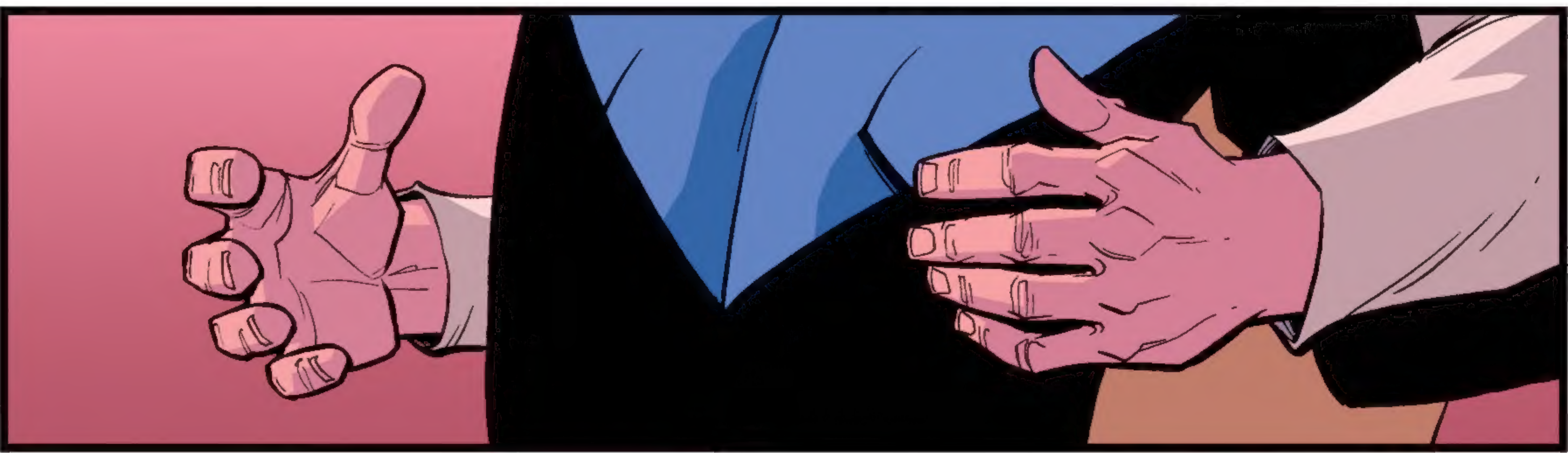
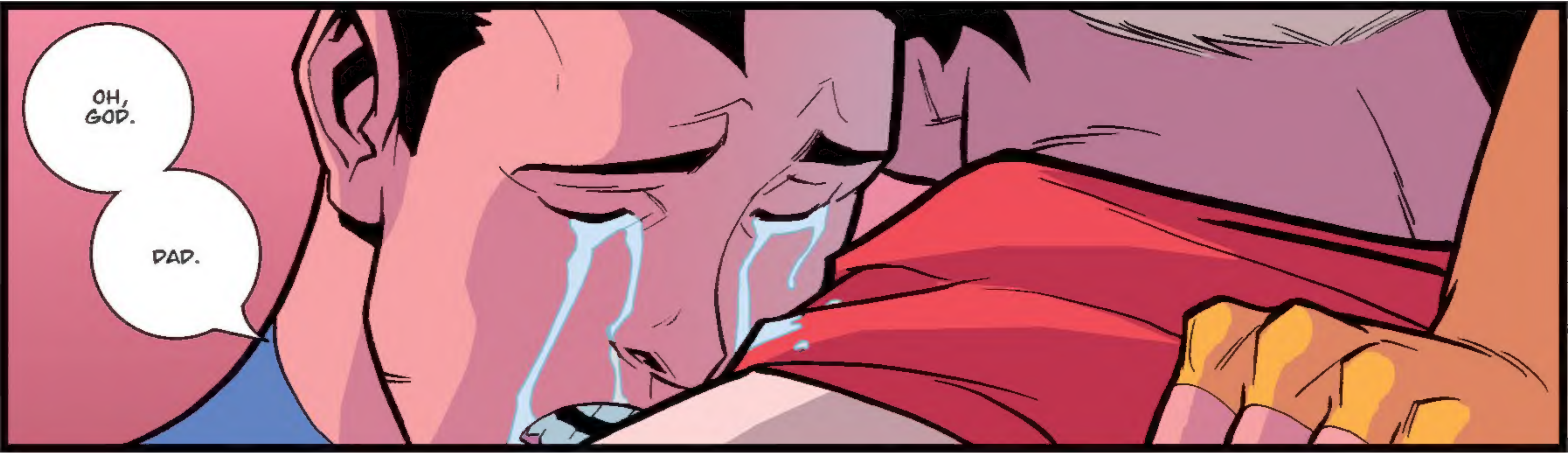


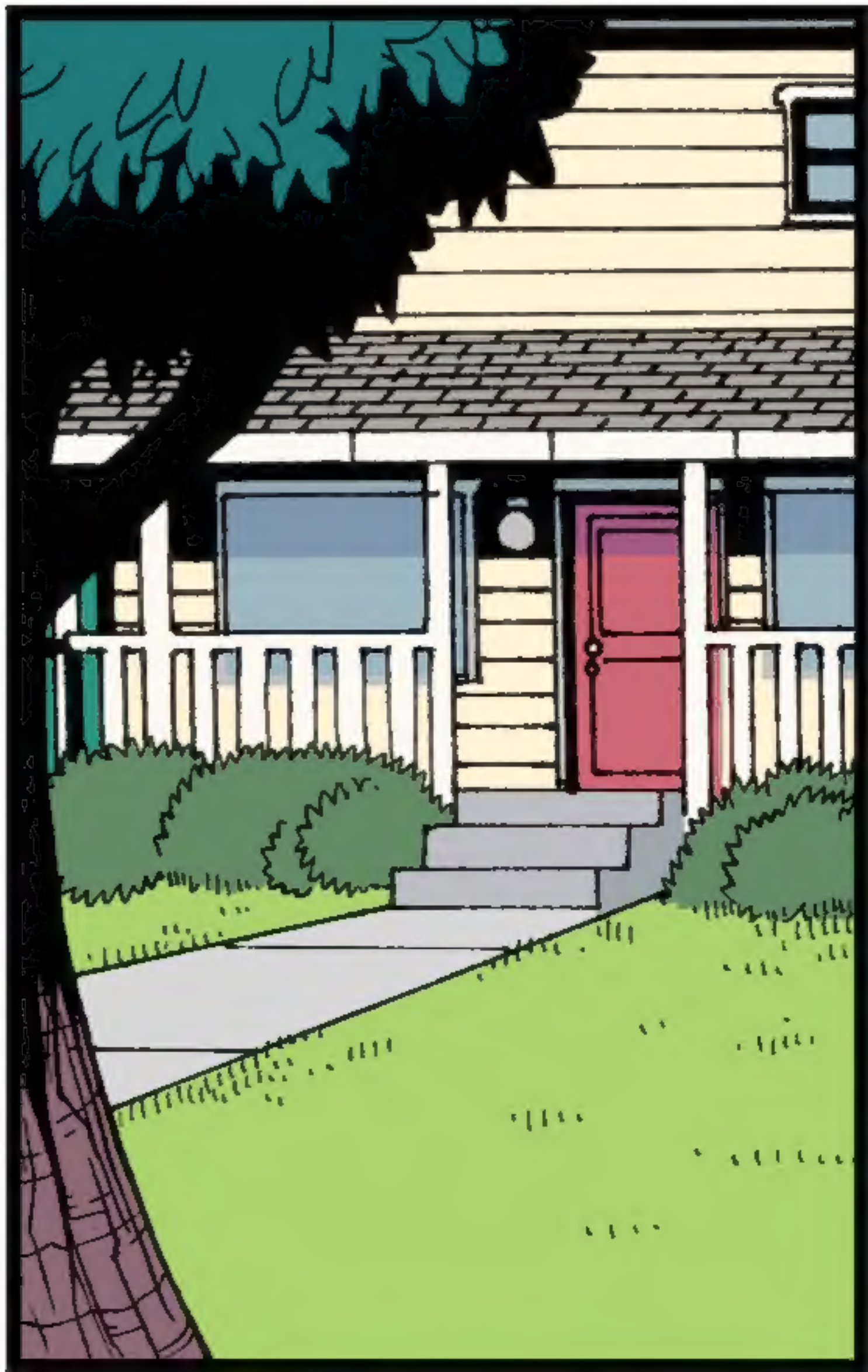
DAD?











OKAY--I THINK THAT'S EVERYTHING. I CAN DO A LITTLE STUDYING AT RED LIGHTS ON THE WAY--AND I'LL HAVE TWENTY MINUTES ONCE I GET THERE TO LOOK OVER THINGS ONE LAST TIME BEFORE THE EXAM STARTS.

YOU'RE GOING TO PASS, DEBBIE. DON'T WORRY--YOU'RE GOING TO PASS.



GREETINGS FROM THE US GOVERNMENT.

MISTER STEDMAN! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO TELEPORT DIRECTLY INTO THE HOUSE?

YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE SOMEONE A HEART ATTACK.



MISS GRAYSON. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO CALL ME CECIL? BESIDES, IF I START TELEPORTING INTO THE FRONT LAWN, HOW LONG DO YOU THINK YOUR SON'S SECRET IDENTITY WILL LAST?



I WOULD STILL PREFER YOU USED THE BACK YARD OR GARAGE OR SOMETHING.

WHAT IS IT YOU'RE HERE FOR? MARK IS STILL IN SPACE, ISN'T HE?



SO YOU DID GET MY MESSAGE. I'VE BEEN VERY BUSY THIS PAST WEEK AND I JUST WANTED TO APOLOGIZE FOR NOT CONTACTING YOU IN PERSON BEFORE.

AND TO APOLOGIZE FOR ALLOWING MARK TO VENTURE OUT INTO THE UNKNOWN LIKE HE HAS. I TRIED TO STOP HIM, I ASSURE YOU.



THE MAN WHO DELIVERED THE MESSAGE, DONALD--I THINK, WAS VERY KIND.

AND AS FAR AS MARK GOING OUT INTO SPACE, HE THINKS IT'S THE RIGHT THING AND SO HE'S DOING THE RIGHT THING. I'M PROUD OF HIM. WORRIED, BUT PROUD.

NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.

WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO IN SUCH A HURRY?



I'VE GOT THE FINAL EXAM FOR MY REAL ESTATE CLASS TODAY. I THOUGHT YOU GOVERNMENT TYPES KNEW EVERYTHING.

REAL ESTATE--AREN'T WE PAYING YOU ENOUGH?



THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL. I JUST NEED SOMETHING TO DO WITH MY TIME. SOMETHING TO KEEP ME BUSY.



WHY, MISS GRAYSON--IF YOU WANTED TO DO SOMETHING TO EARN THAT MONEY--ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS SAY SO.

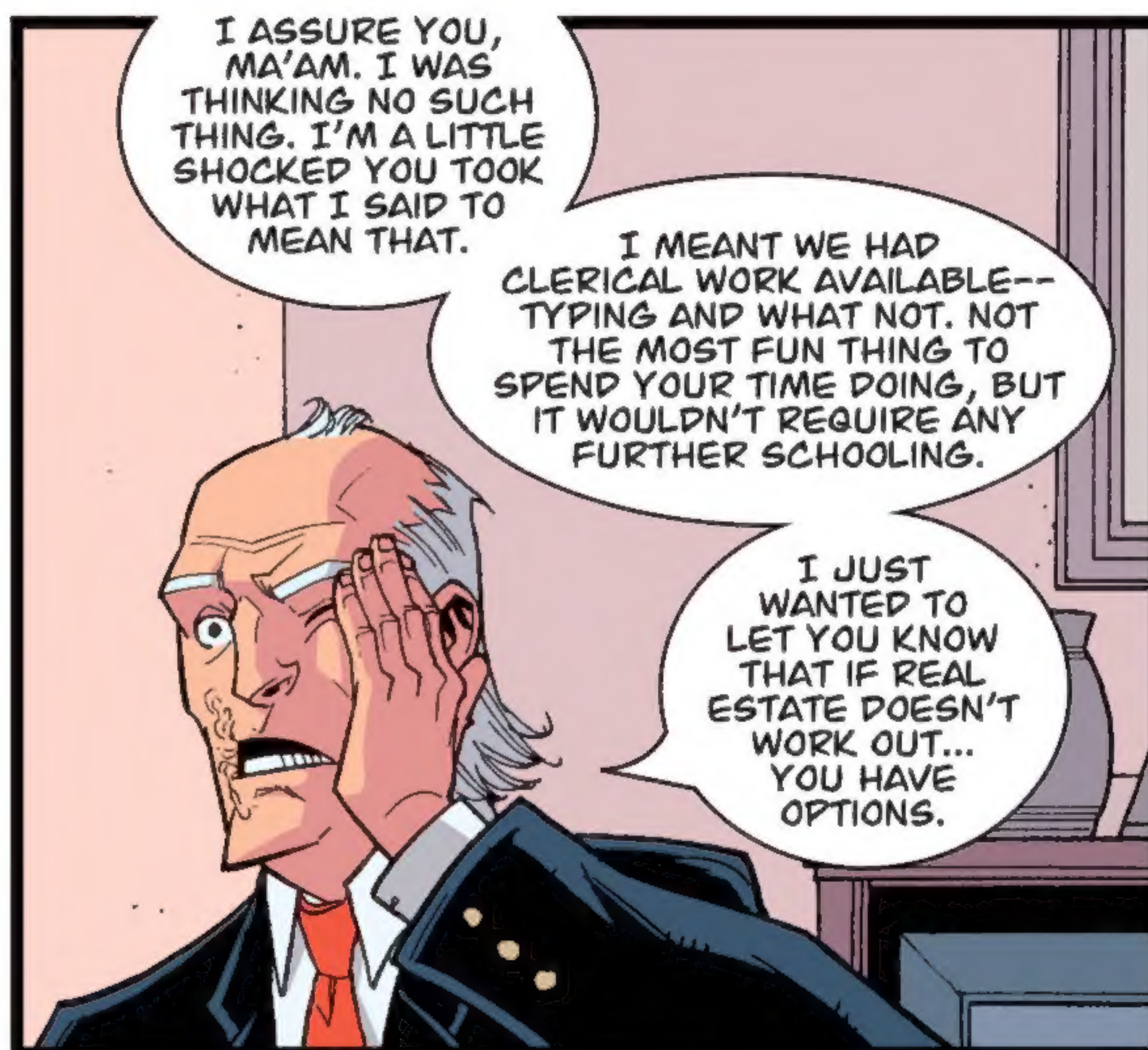






YOU SO MUCH AS IMPLY SOMETHING LIKE THAT AGAIN AND MY SON WILL NEVER DO ANYTHING FOR YOU.

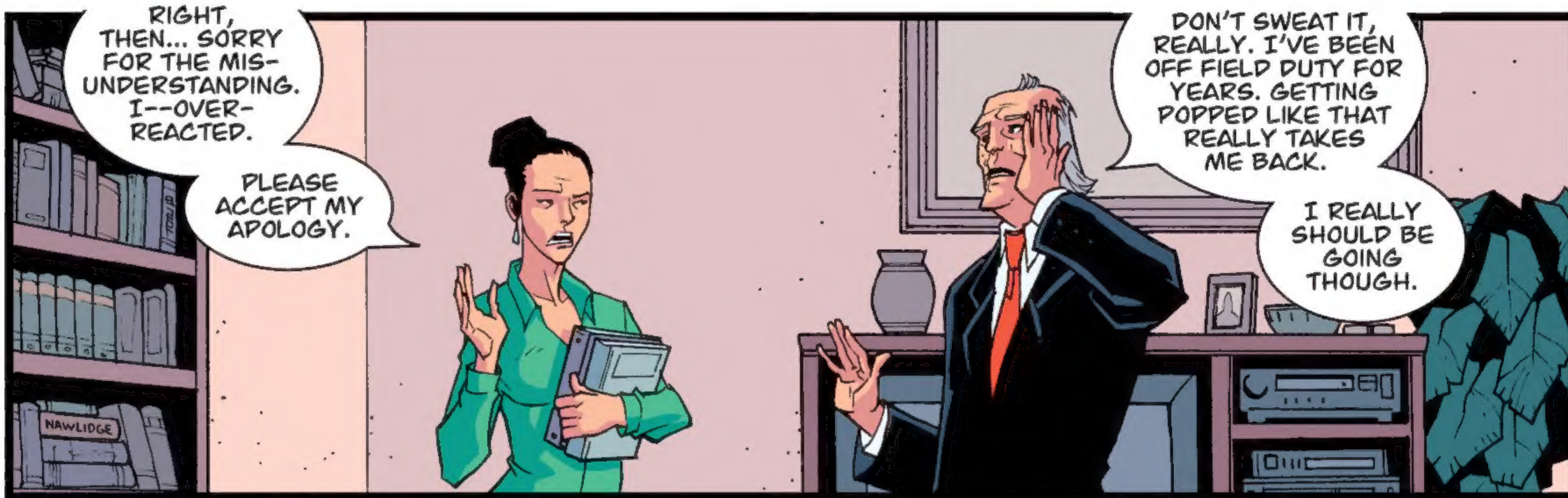
WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING?



I ASSURE YOU, MA'AM. I WAS THINKING NO SUCH THING. I'M A LITTLE SHOCKED YOU TOOK WHAT I SAID TO MEAN THAT.

I MEANT WE HAD CLERICAL WORK AVAILABLE-- TYPING AND WHAT NOT. NOT THE MOST FUN THING TO SPEND YOUR TIME DOING, BUT IT WOULDN'T REQUIRE ANY FURTHER SCHOOLING.

I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW THAT IF REAL ESTATE DOESN'T WORK OUT... YOU HAVE OPTIONS.



RIGHT, THEN... SORRY FOR THE MIS-UNDERSTANDING. I--OVER-REACTED.

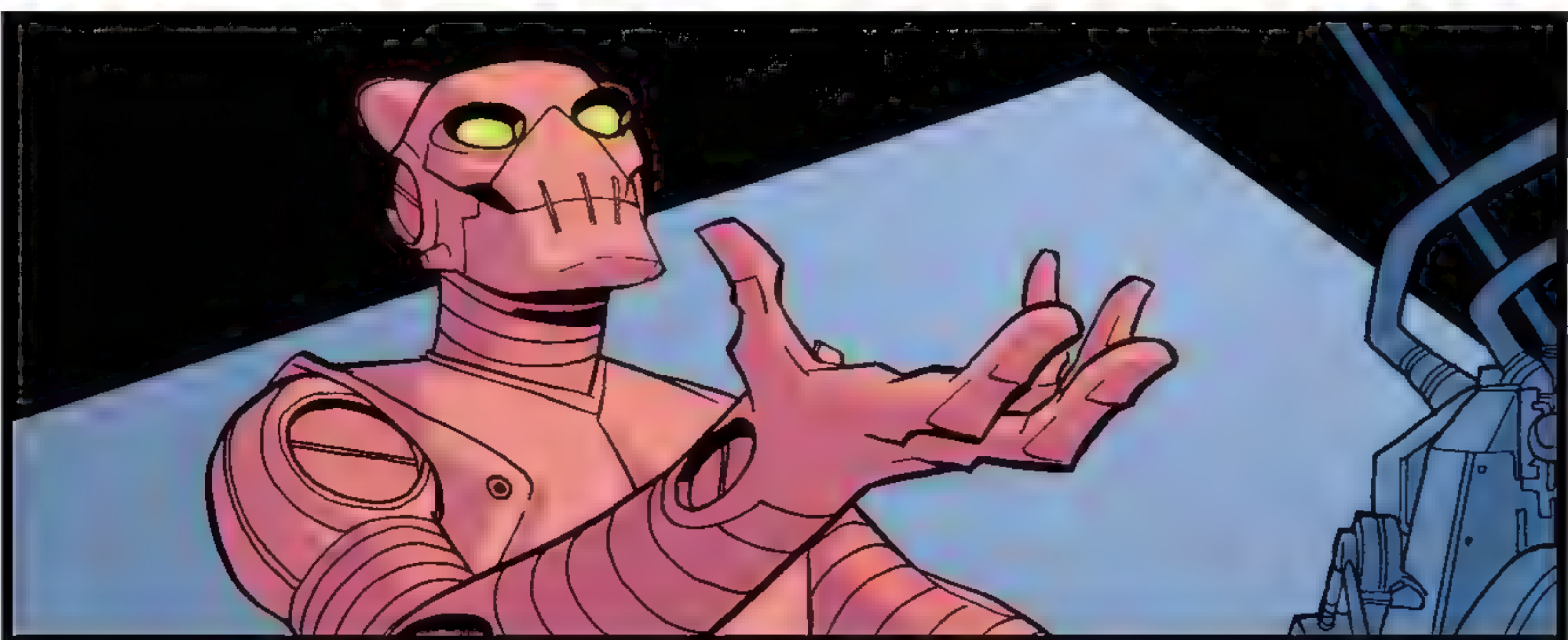
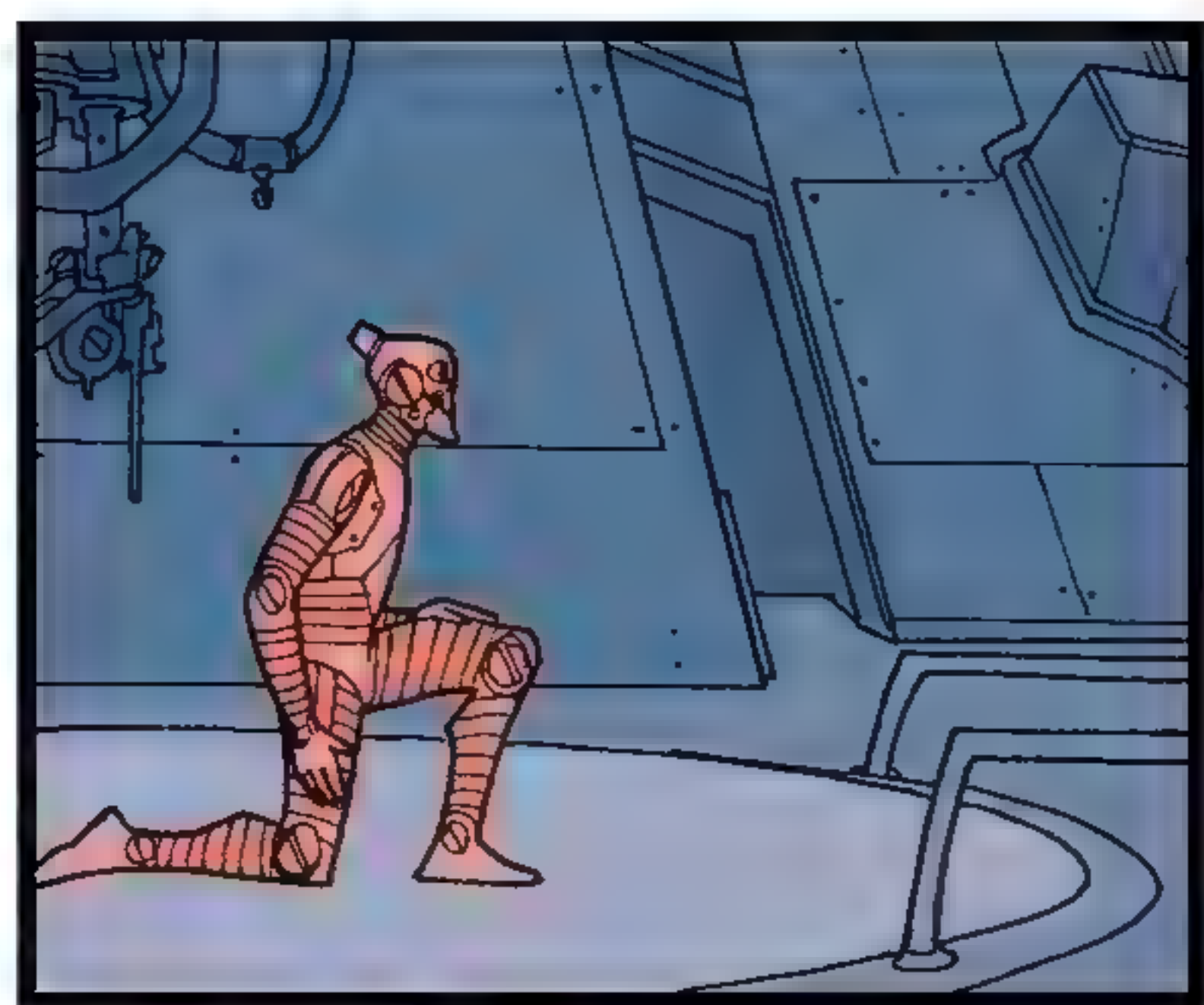
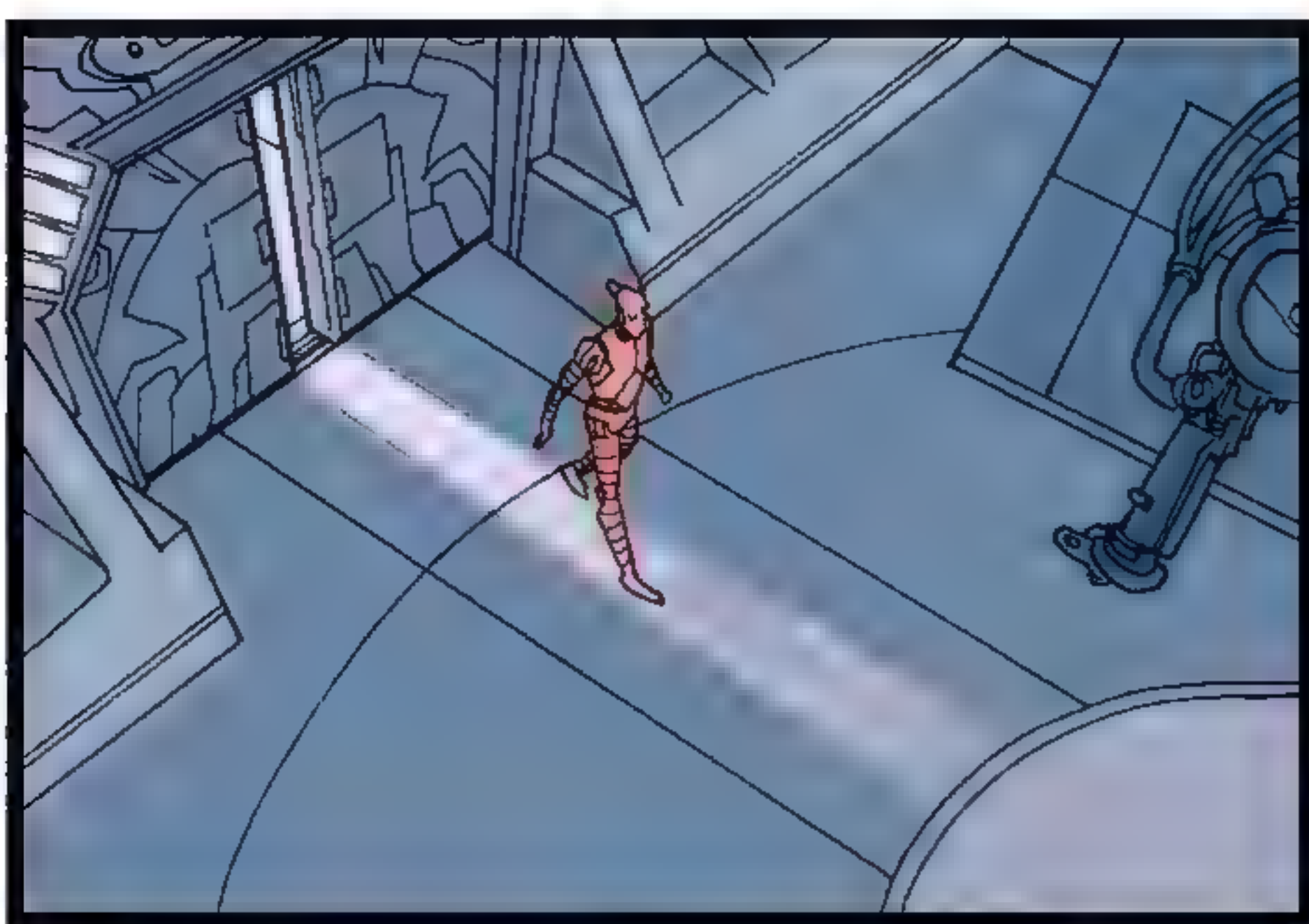
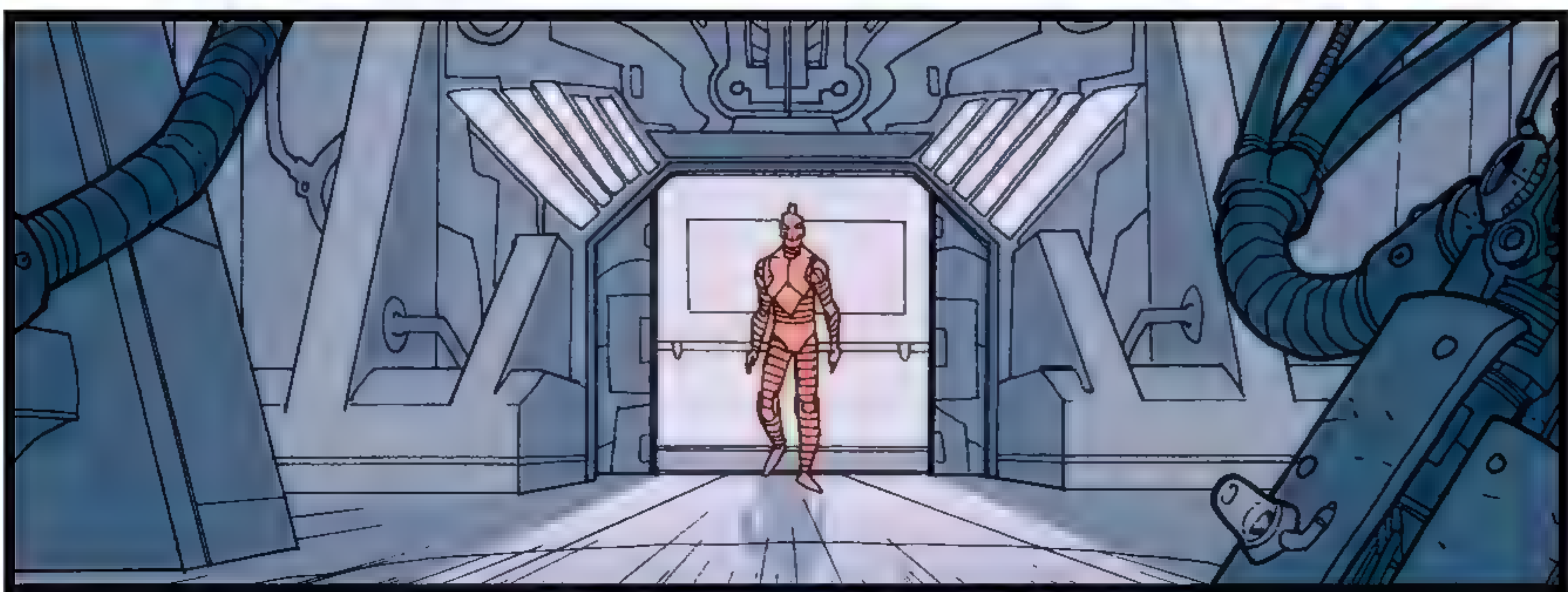
PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGY.

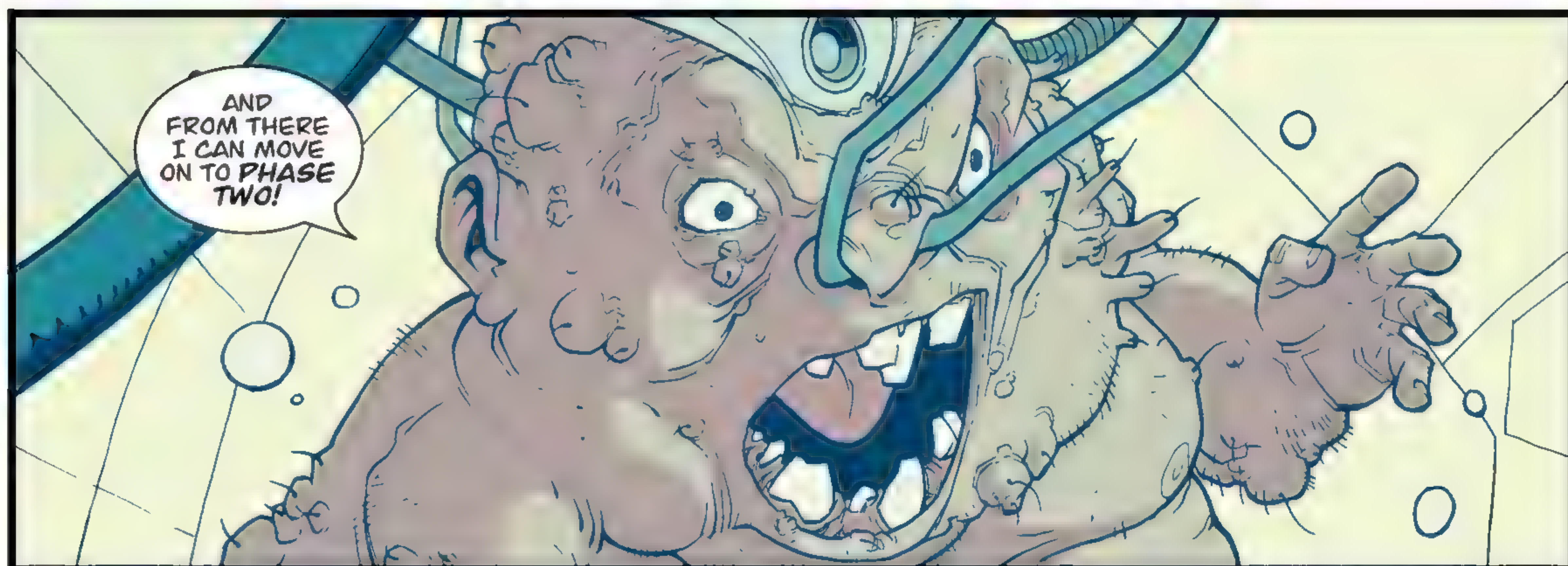
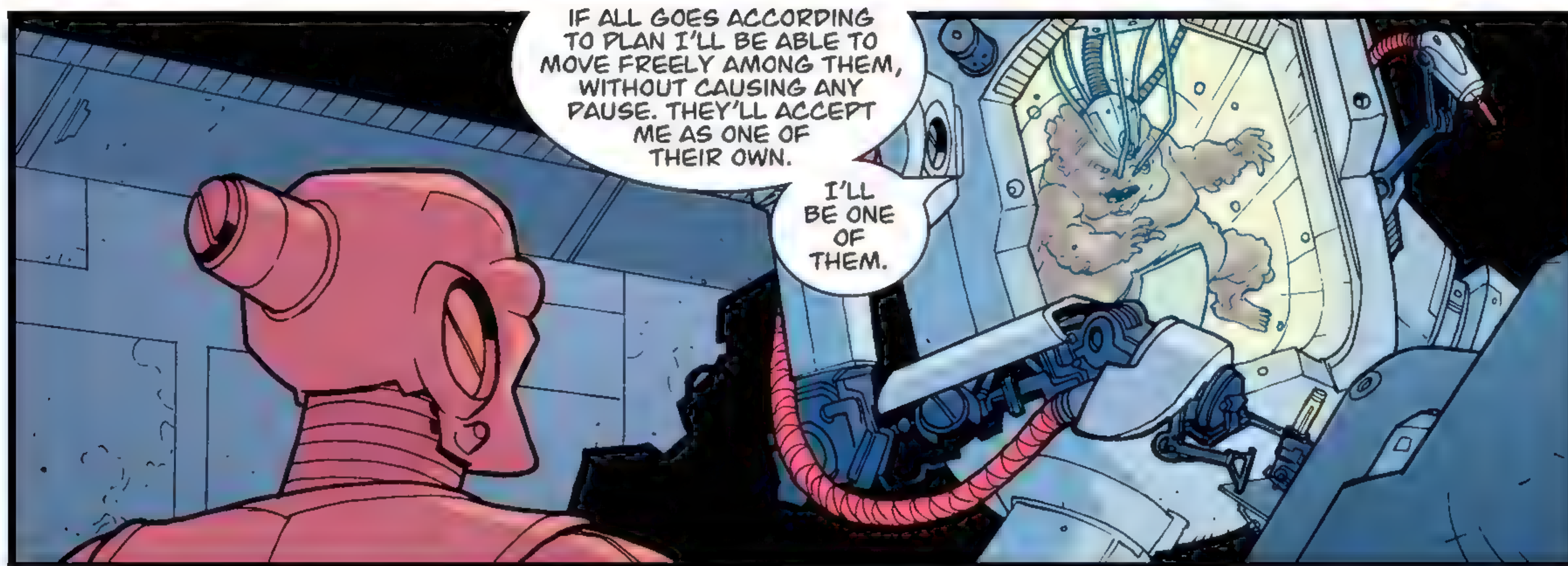
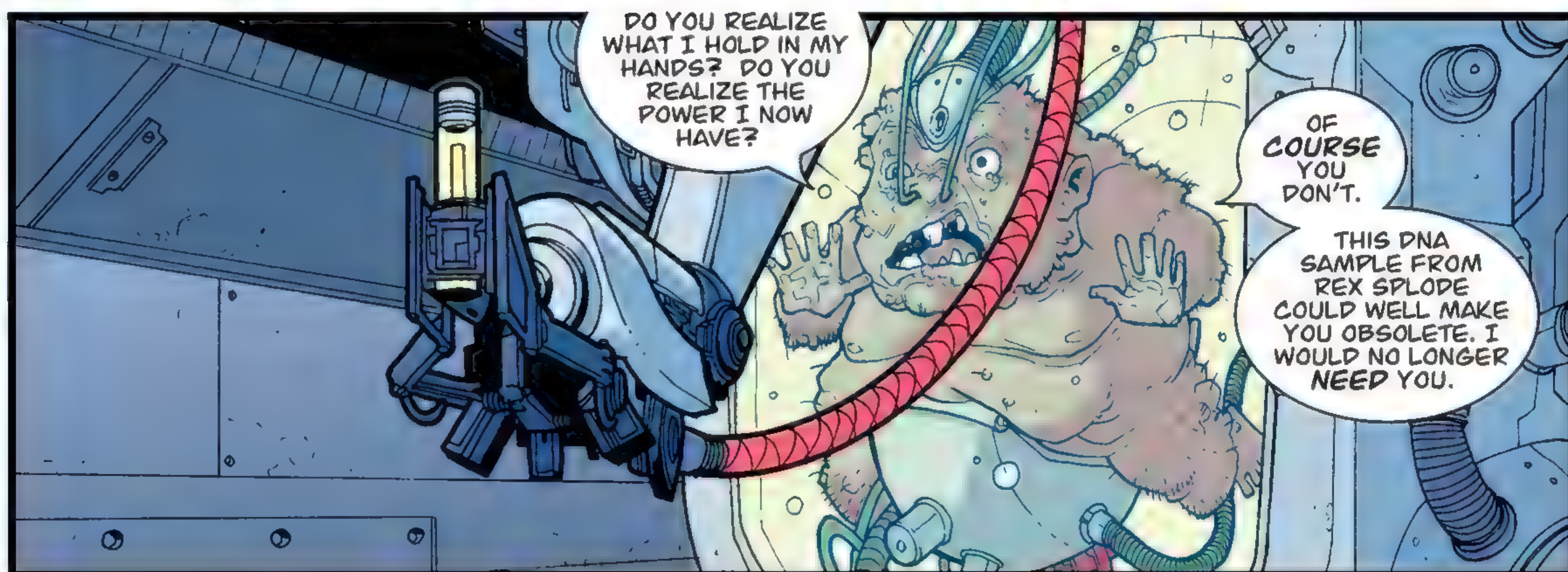
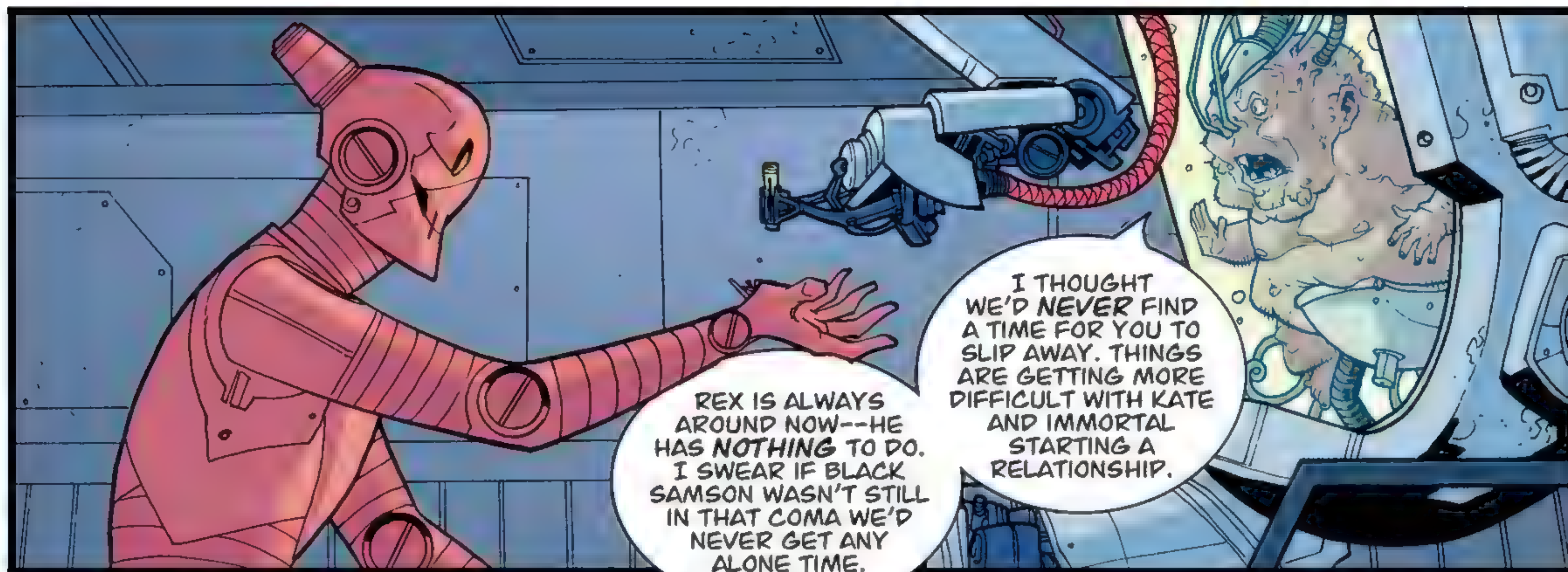
DON'T SWEAT IT, REALLY. I'VE BEEN OFF FIELD DUTY FOR YEARS. GETTING POPPED LIKE THAT REALLY TAKES ME BACK.

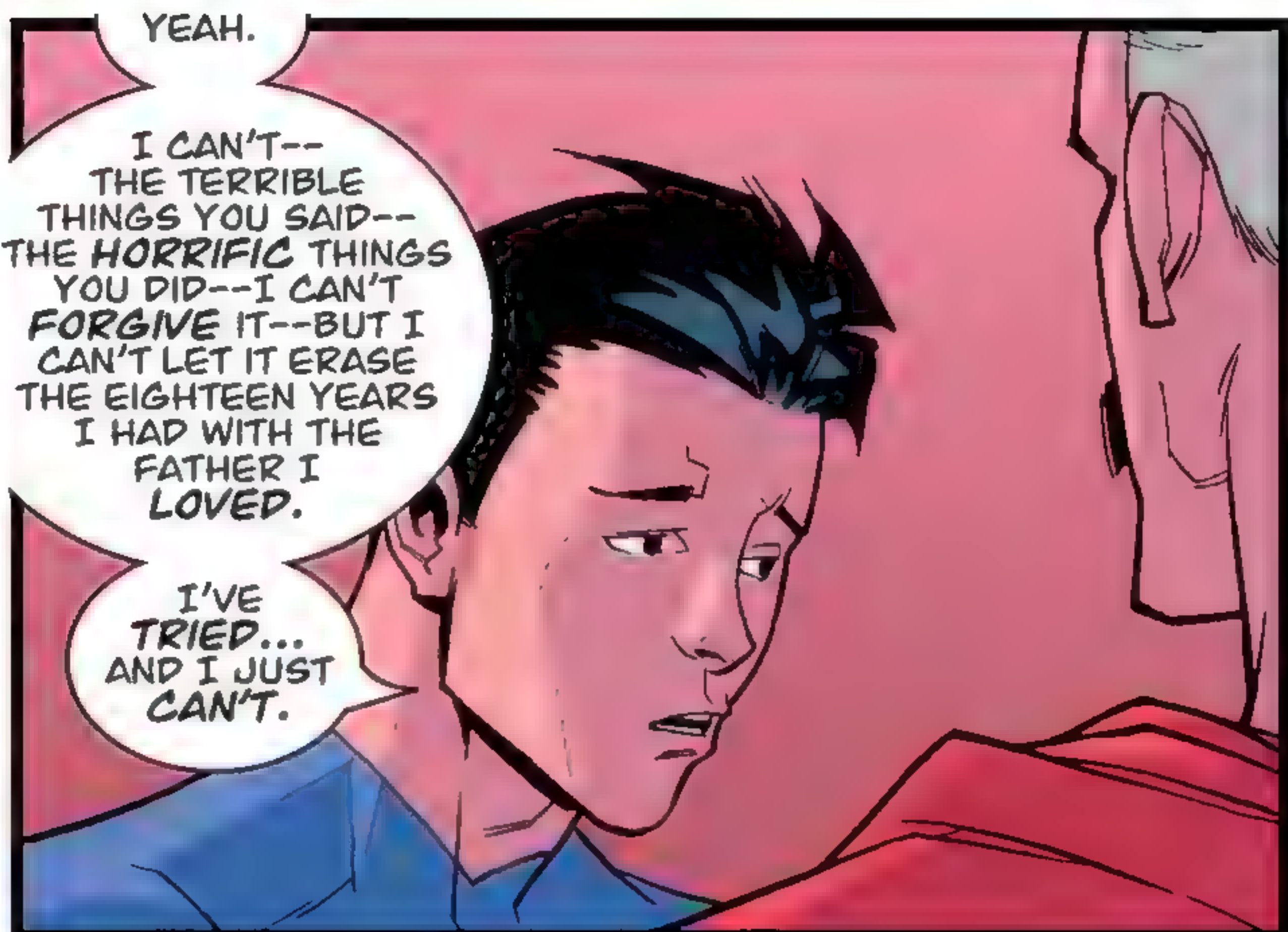
I REALLY SHOULD BE GOING THOUGH.



ME TOO.







I LIVED AS A VILTRUMITE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS BEFORE I CAME TO EARTH--BUT WHAT LITTLE TIME I SPENT THERE--CHANGED ME.

I WAS READY TO KILL YOU WHEN YOU DEFIED ME. I WOULD HAVE. THOSE ARE THE WAYS OF THE VILTRUMITE.

YOU WERE WEAK. YOU DESERVED TO DIE.

BUT WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT I WOULD HAVE TO KILL YOU--THAT YOU WOULD NOT JOIN ME--WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT I WOULD HAVE NO OTHER OPTION...

...I COULDN'T DO IT.

I HAD TWO CHOICES. I COULD KILL YOU AND ENSLAVE EARTH AS I WAS MEANT TO. OR I COULD LEAVE EARTH--AND LEAVE YOU.

I CHOSE TO LEAVE.





IT WAS NOT A DECISION MADE LIGHTLY. I DECIDED TO TURN MY BACK ON MY VILTRUMITE HERITAGE.

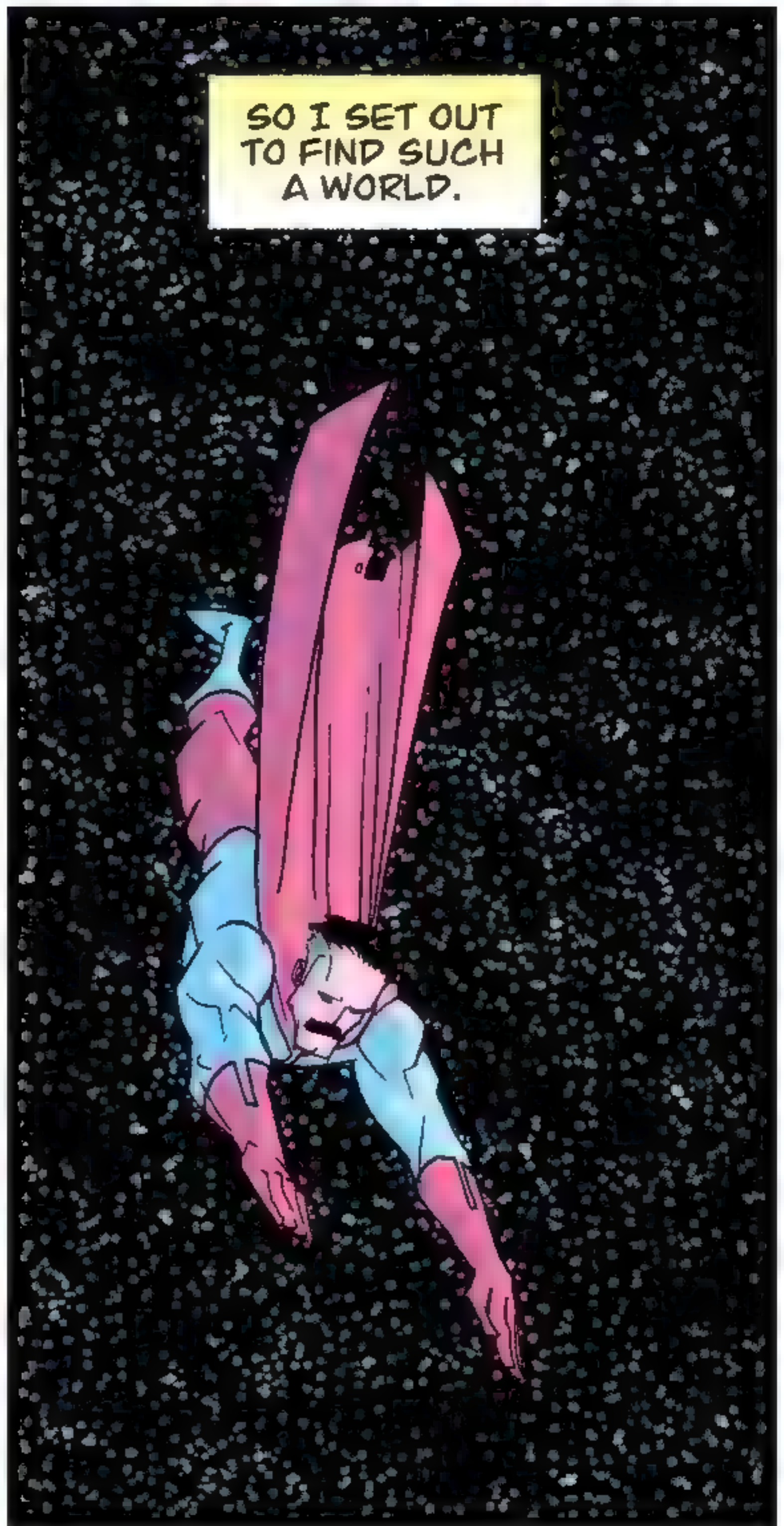
MY OFFENSE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO GREATER HAD I LISTENED TO YOU AND CEASED OUR FIGHT INSTANTLY.



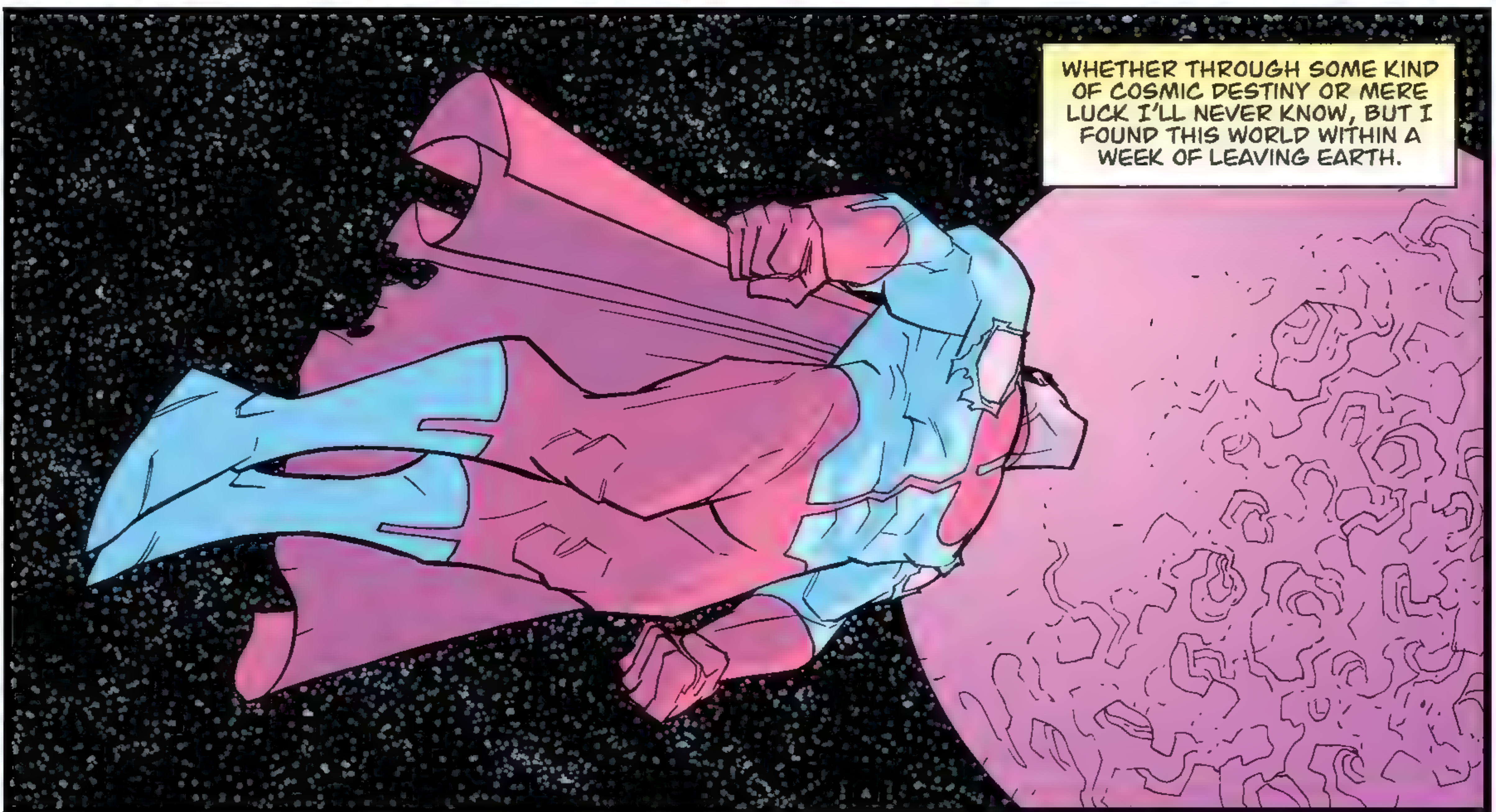
I WAS A FUGITIVE FROM MY OWN PEOPLE. IT WOULD ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY LEARNED OF MY TREACHERY.



I CHOSE TO HIDE RATHER THAN TURN MYSELF IN. IF I COULD CONQUER A SIMILAR WORLD MAYBE THEY WOULD LESSEN MY PUNISHMENT.



SO I SET OUT TO FIND SUCH A WORLD.



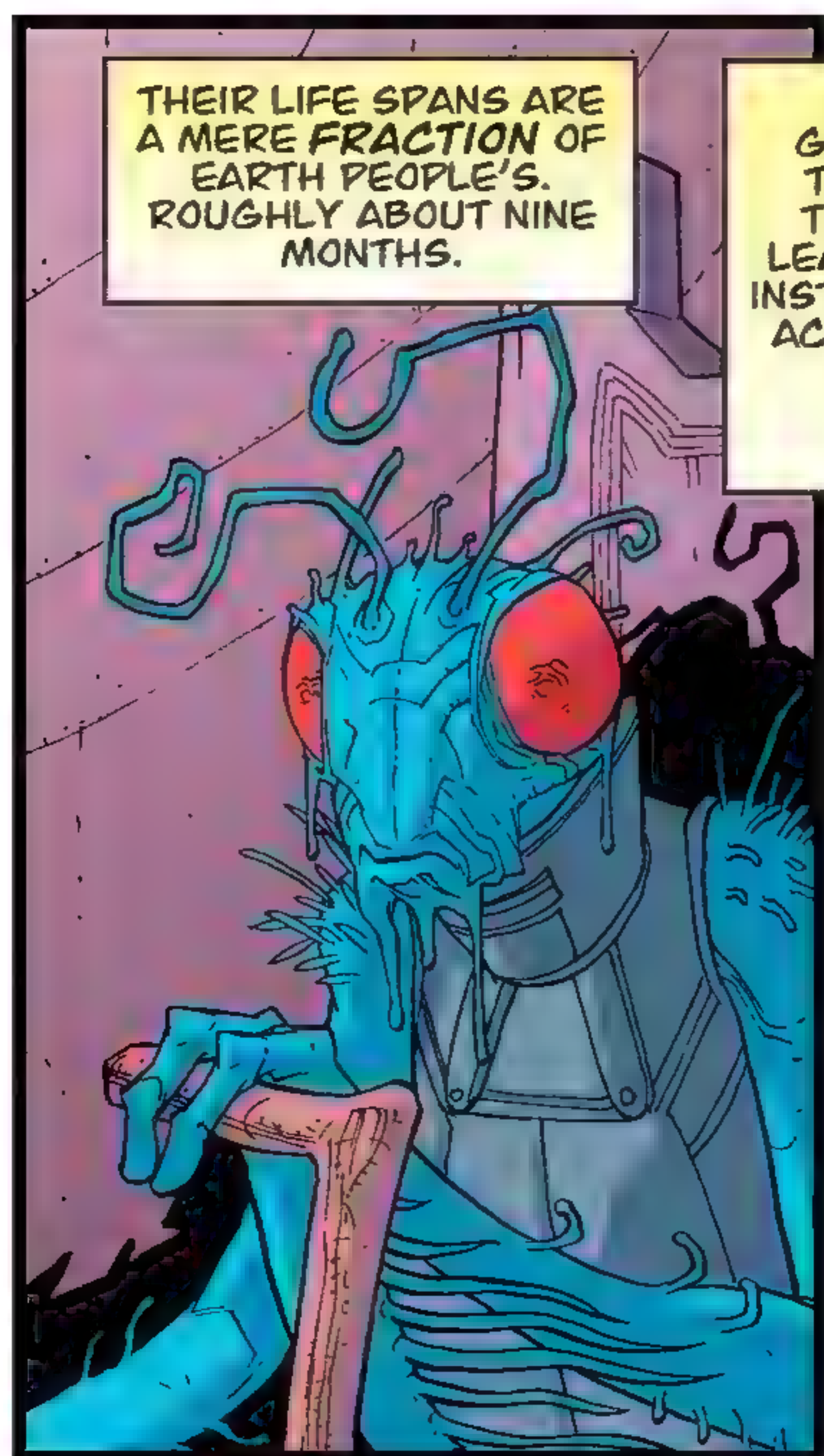
WHETHER THROUGH SOME KIND OF COSMIC DESTINY OR MERE LUCK I'LL NEVER KNOW, BUT I FOUND THIS WORLD WITHIN A WEEK OF LEAVING EARTH.



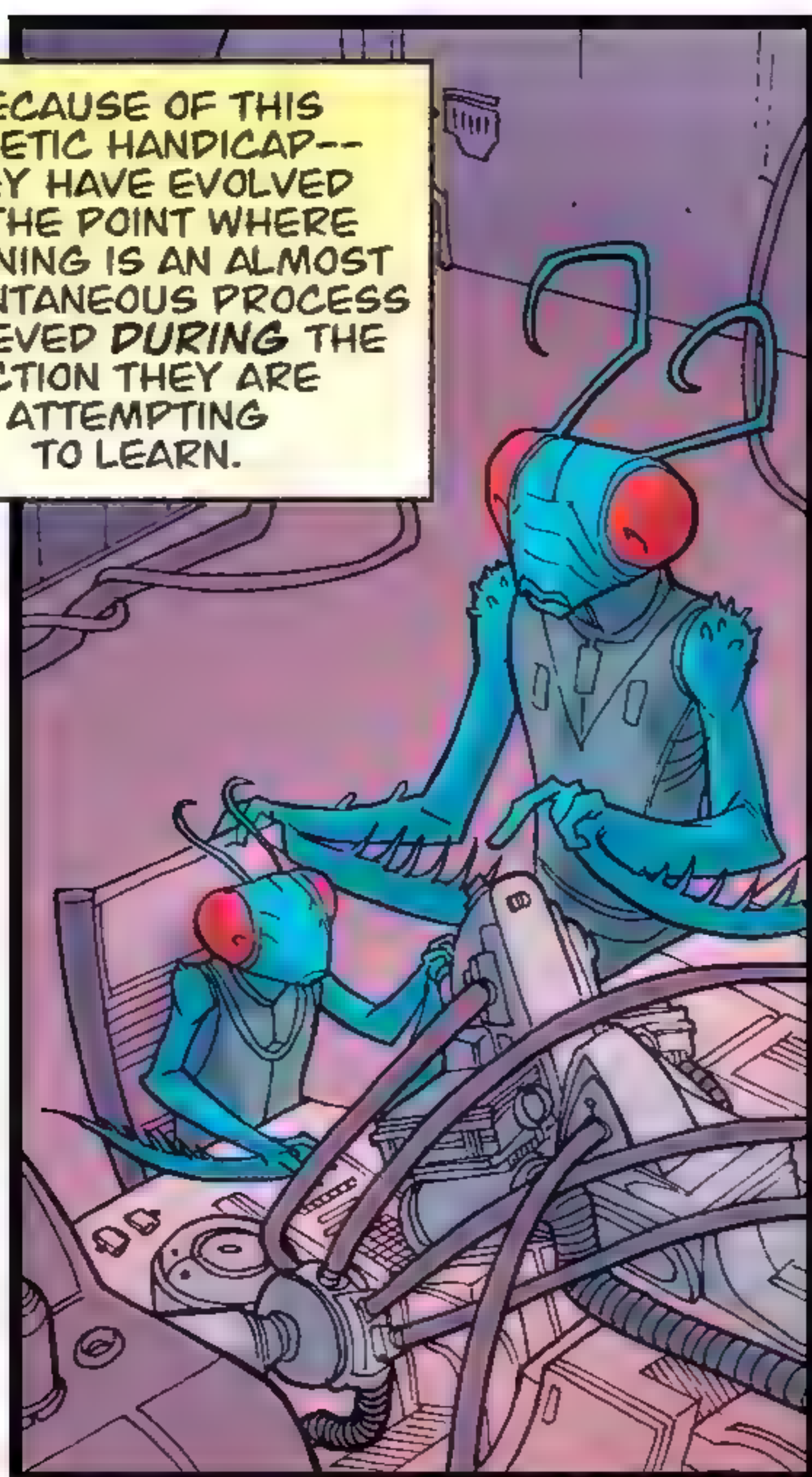
THEY ARE A PEOPLE VASTLY DIFFERENT THAN THOSE OF EARTH. THOUGH THEIR TECHNOLOGY AND ADVANCEMENT AS A SPECIES ARE VERY SIMILAR.

IN SOME WAYS THEY ARE LESS ADVANCED, IN OTHER WAYS, THEY ARE MORE ADVANCED.

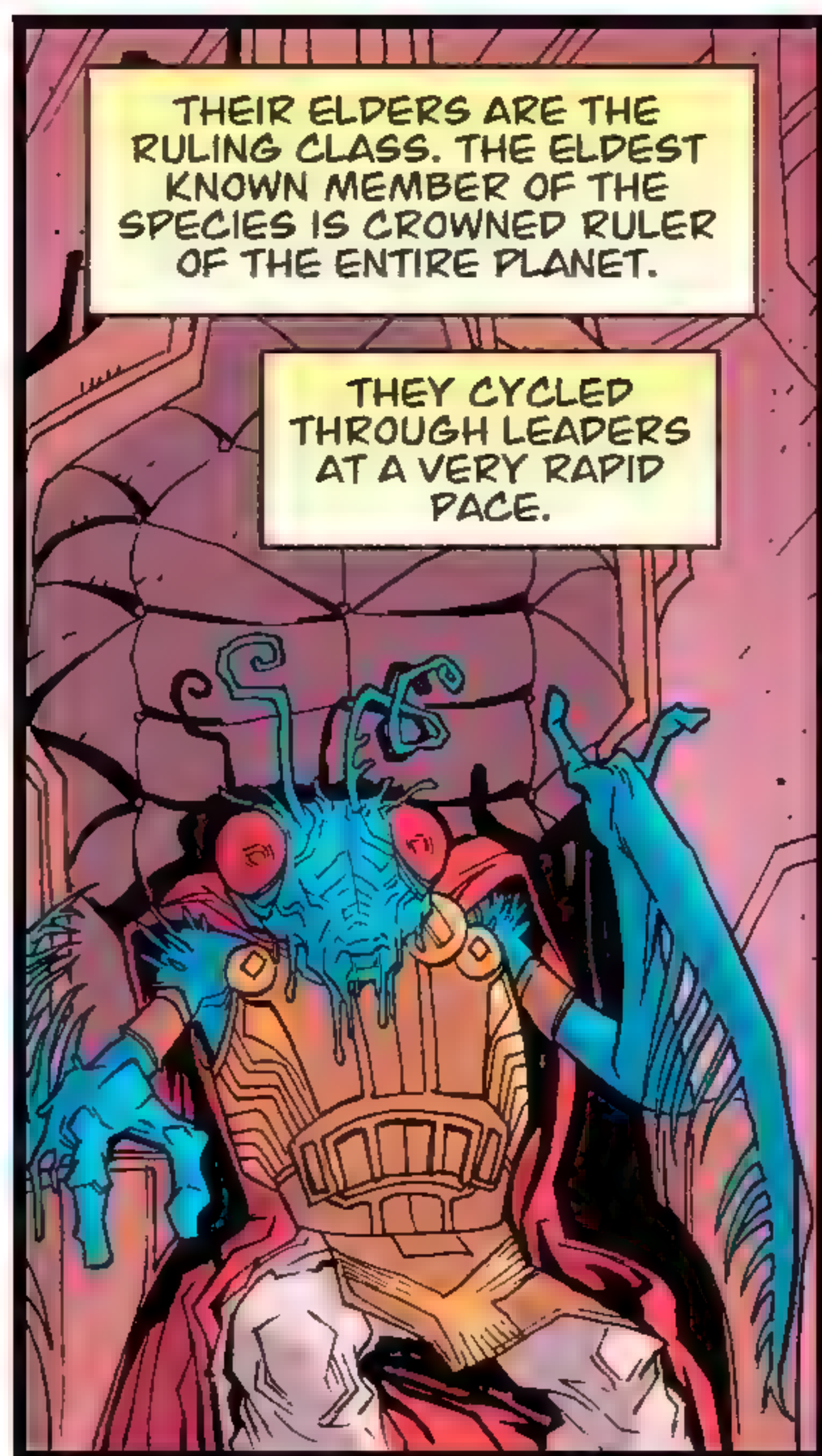
I DECIDED ON THIS WORLD ALMOST INSTANTLY.



THEIR LIFE SPANS ARE A MERE FRACTION OF EARTH PEOPLE'S. ROUGHLY ABOUT NINE MONTHS.



BECAUSE OF THIS GENETIC HANDICAP-- THEY HAVE EVOLVED TO THE POINT WHERE LEARNING IS AN ALMOST INSTANTANEOUS PROCESS ACHIEVED DURING THE ACTION THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO LEARN.



THEIR ELDERS ARE THE RULING CLASS. THE ELDEST KNOWN MEMBER OF THE SPECIES IS CROWNED RULER OF THE ENTIRE PLANET.

THEY CYCLED THROUGH LEADERS AT A VERY RAPID PACE.

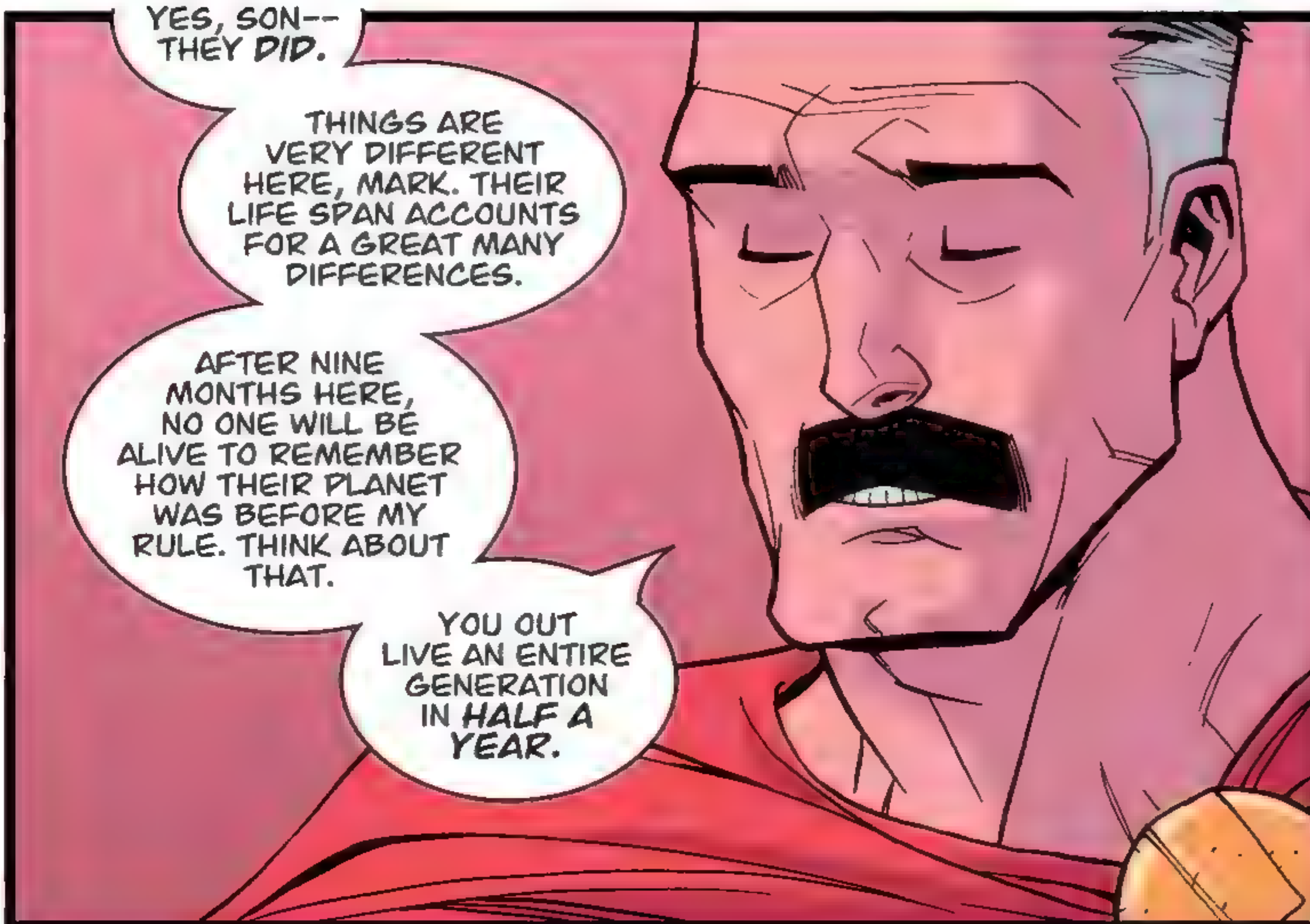


NEEDLESS TO SAY IT WAS INCREDIBLY EASY TO ASSUME CONTROL OF THIS PLANET. ONCE THEY LEARNED HOW OLD I WAS--I WAS ELECTED RULER ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.

THINGS MOVE VERY FAST HERE.



THEY JUST HANDED
THE WHOLE PLANET
OVER TO YOU? NO
QUESTIONS
ASKED?



YES, SON--
THEY DID.

THINGS ARE
VERY DIFFERENT
HERE, MARK. THEIR
LIFE SPAN ACCOUNTS
FOR A GREAT MANY
DIFFERENCES.

AFTER NINE
MONTHS HERE,
NO ONE WILL BE
ALIVE TO REMEMBER
HOW THEIR PLANET
WAS BEFORE MY
RULE. THINK ABOUT
THAT.

YOU OUT
LIVE AN ENTIRE
GENERATION
IN HALF A
YEAR.

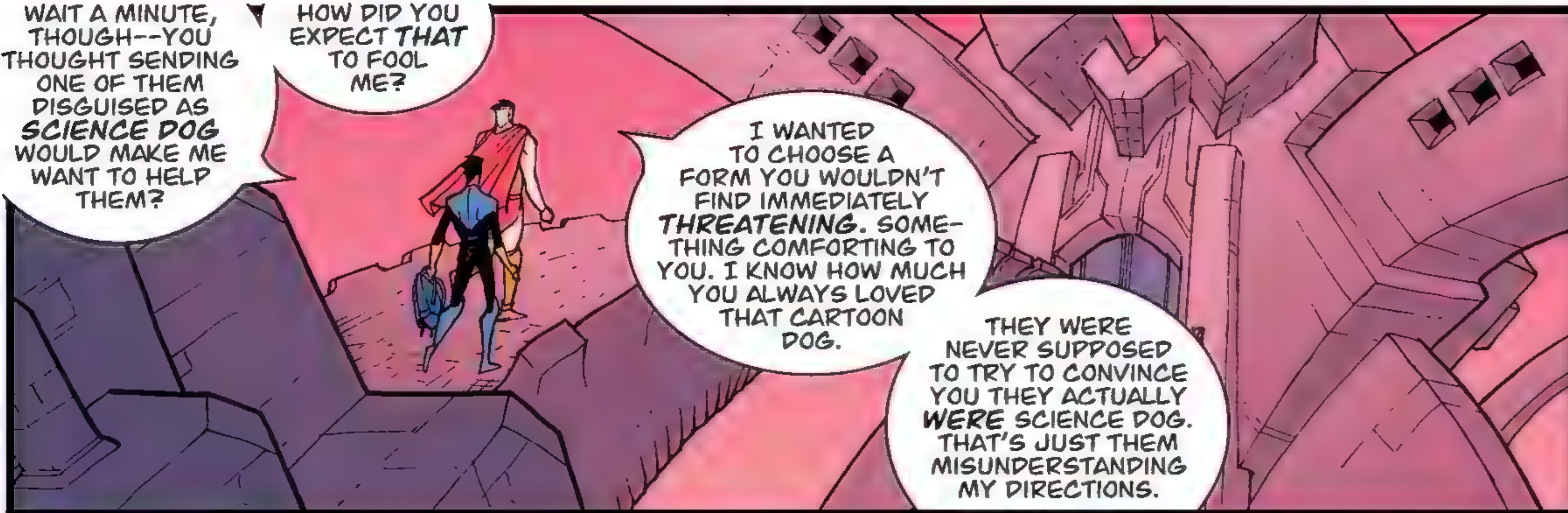
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE
RIGHT. I CAN SEE
HOW THAT WOULD
MAKE A TAKEOVER
EASIER TO
ACCEPT.



COME.
THERE
IS STILL
MUCH TO
DISCUSS.

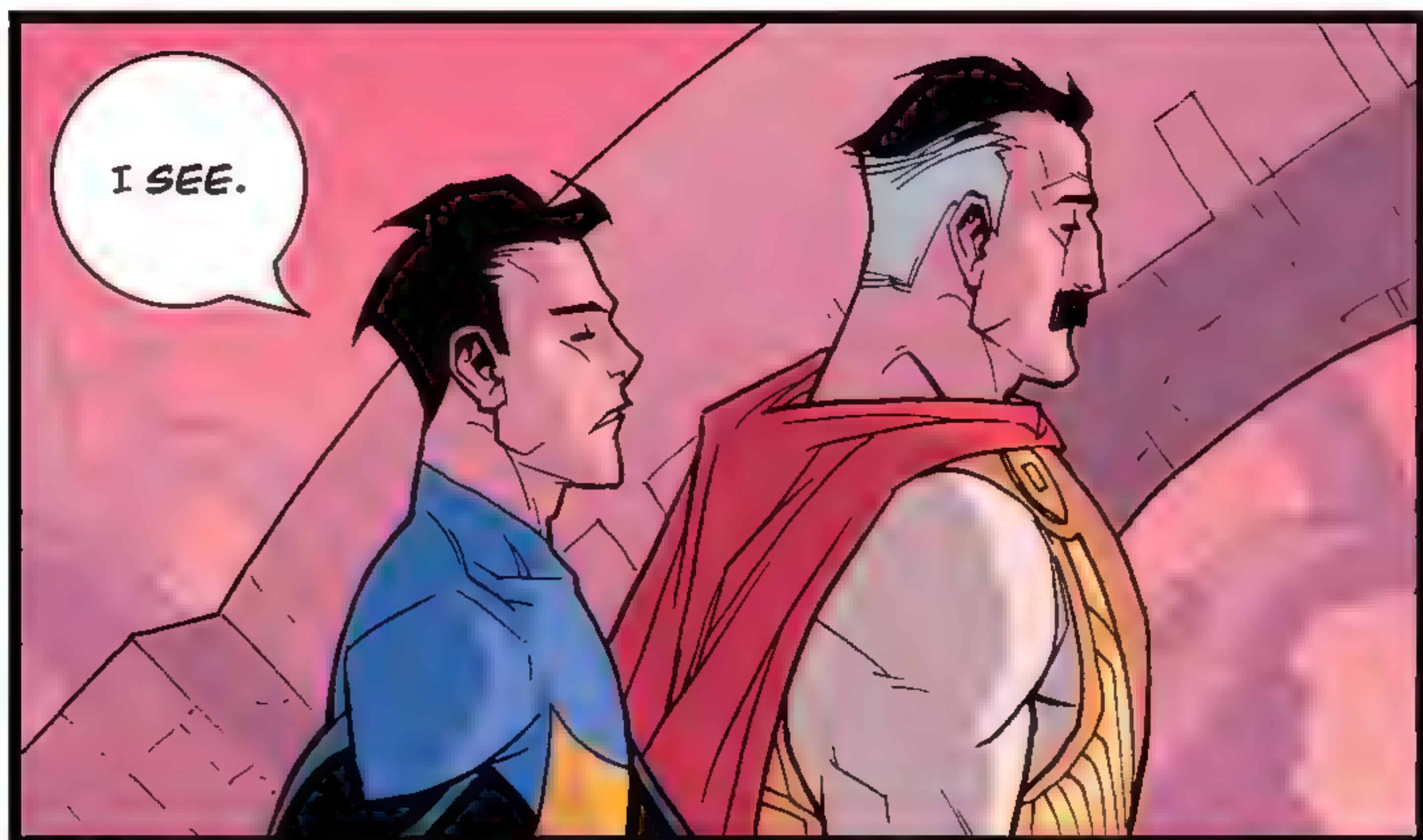
WAIT A MINUTE,
THOUGH--YOU
THOUGHT SENDING
ONE OF THEM
DISGUISED AS
SCIENCE DOG
WOULD MAKE ME
WANT TO HELP
THEM?

HOW DID YOU
EXPECT THAT
TO FOOL
ME?

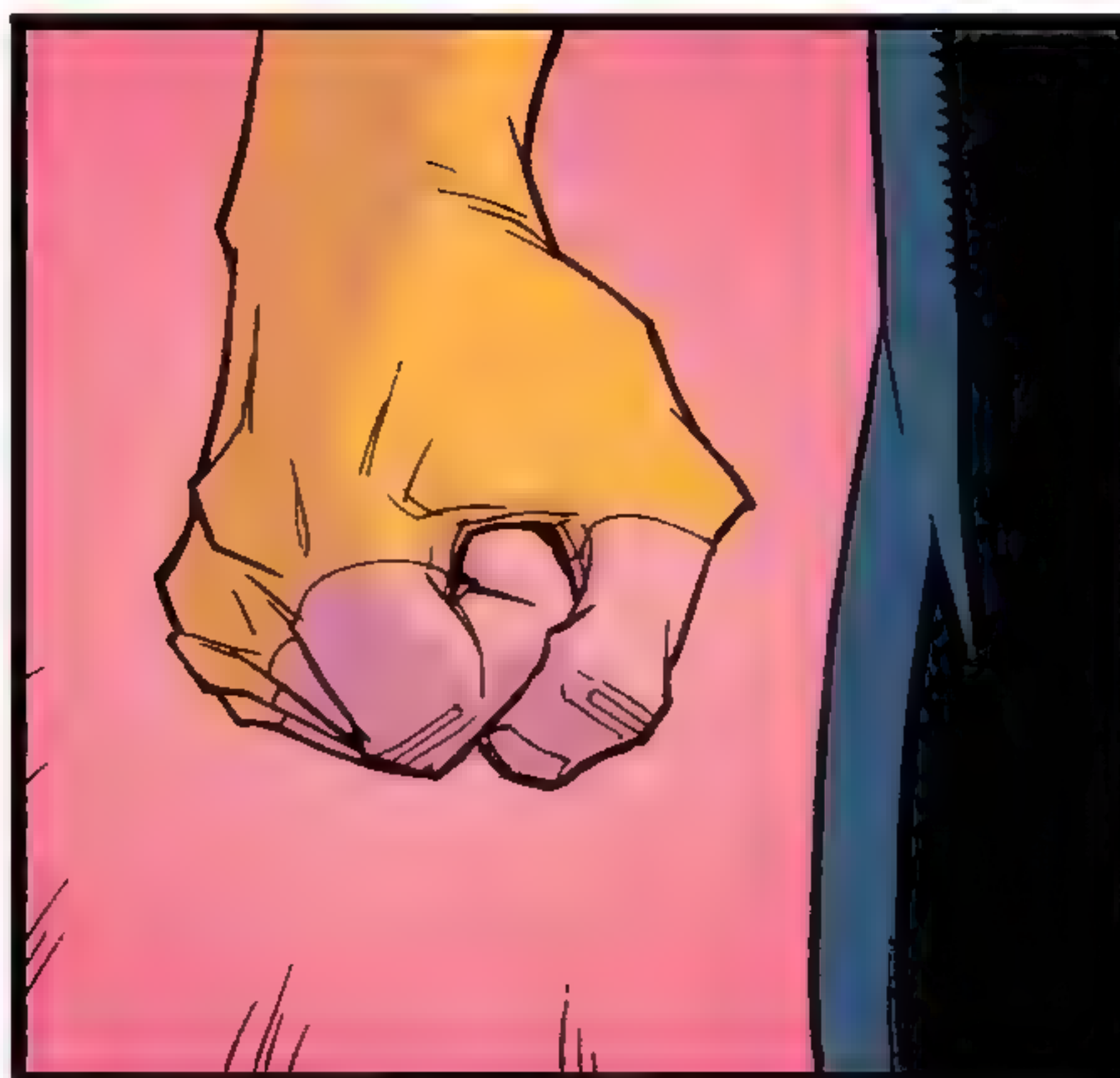


I WANTED
TO CHOOSE A
FORM YOU WOULDN'T
FIND IMMEDIATELY
THREATENING. SOME-
THING COMFORTING TO
YOU. I KNOW HOW MUCH
YOU ALWAYS LOVED
THAT CARTOON
DOG.

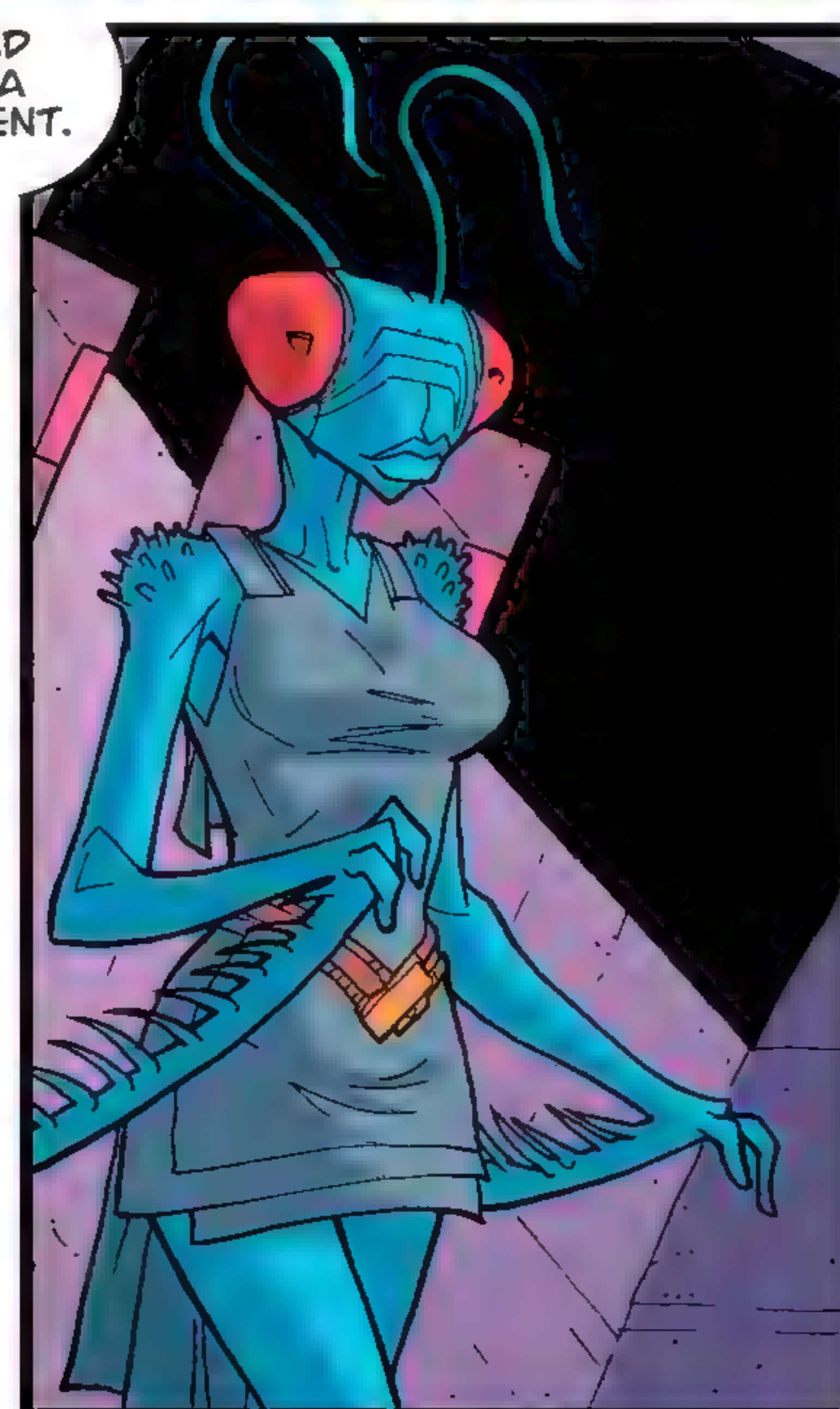
THEY WERE
NEVER SUPPOSED
TO TRY TO CONVINCE
YOU THEY ACTUALLY
WERE **SCIENCE DOG**.
THAT'S JUST THEM
MISUNDERSTANDING
MY DIRECTIONS.

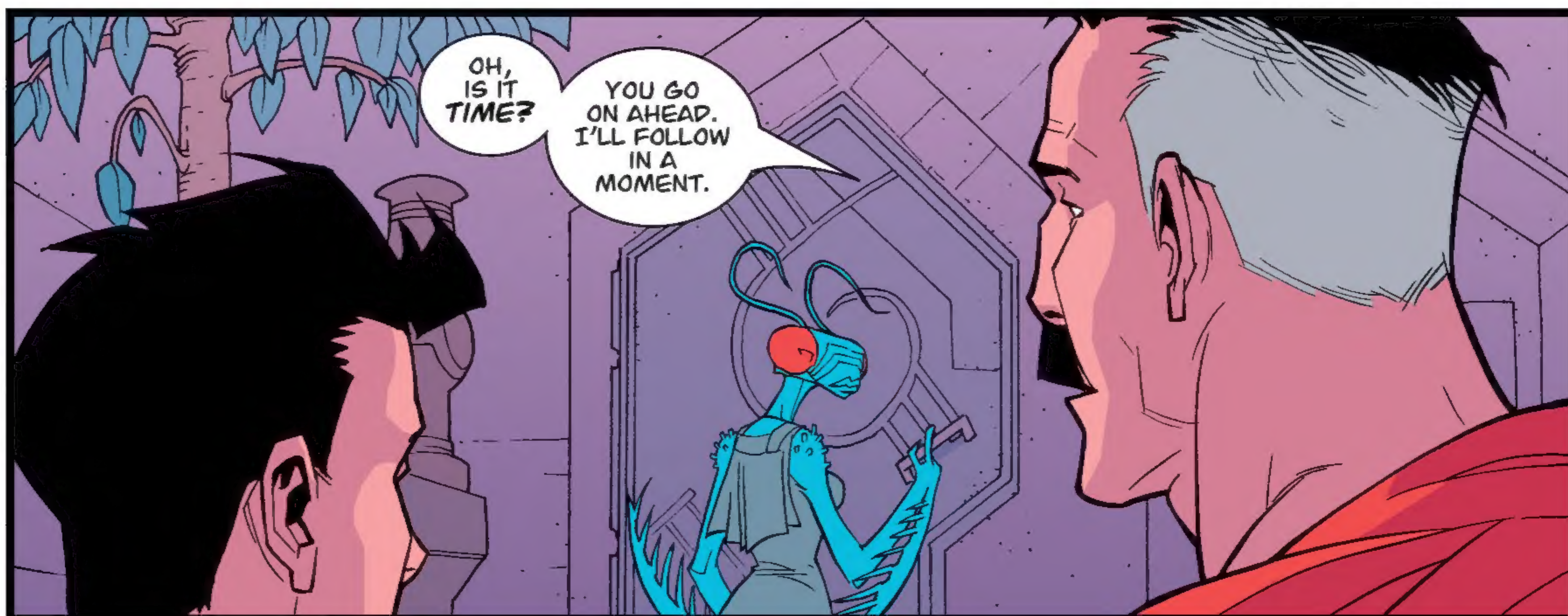
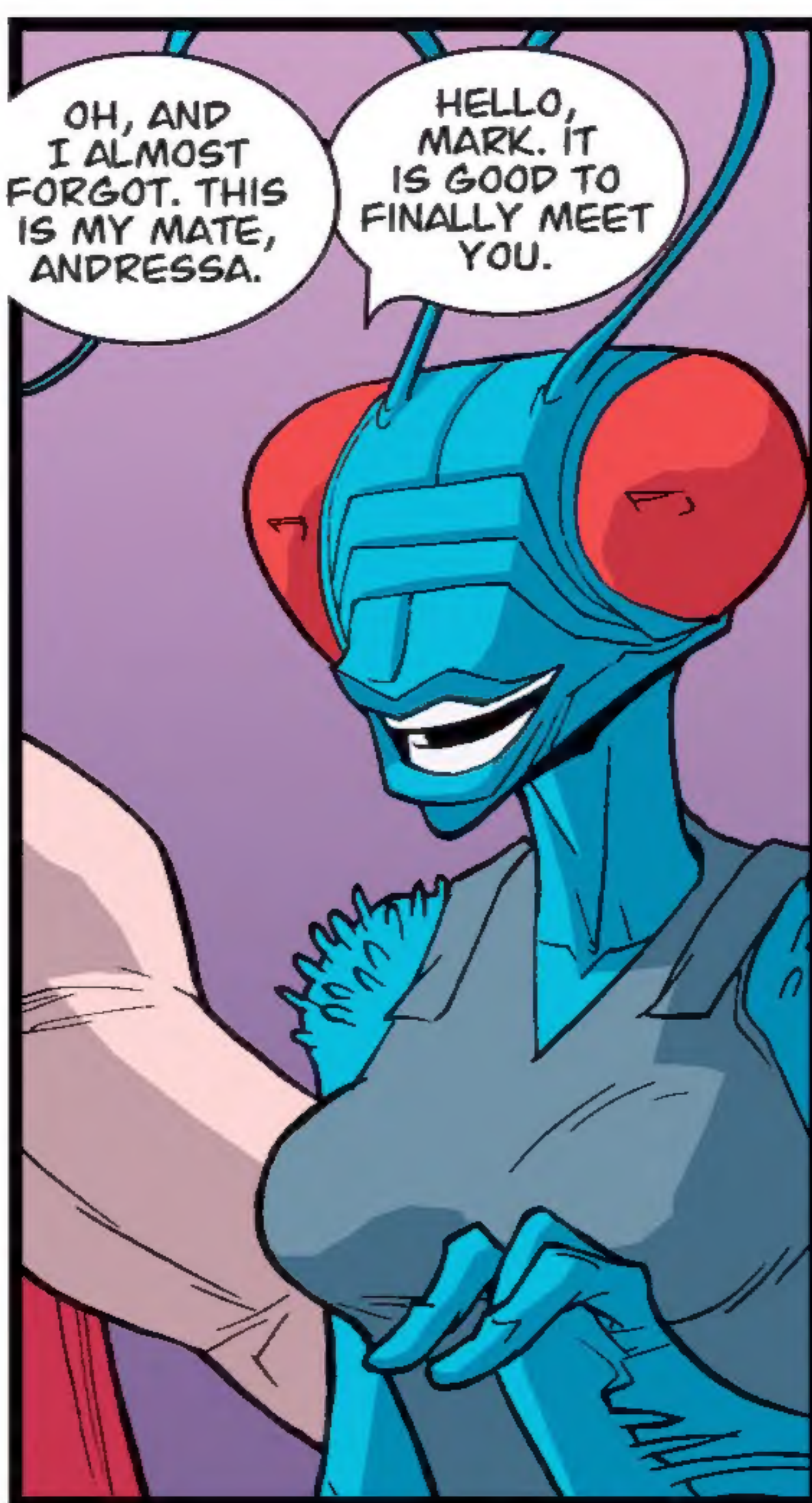


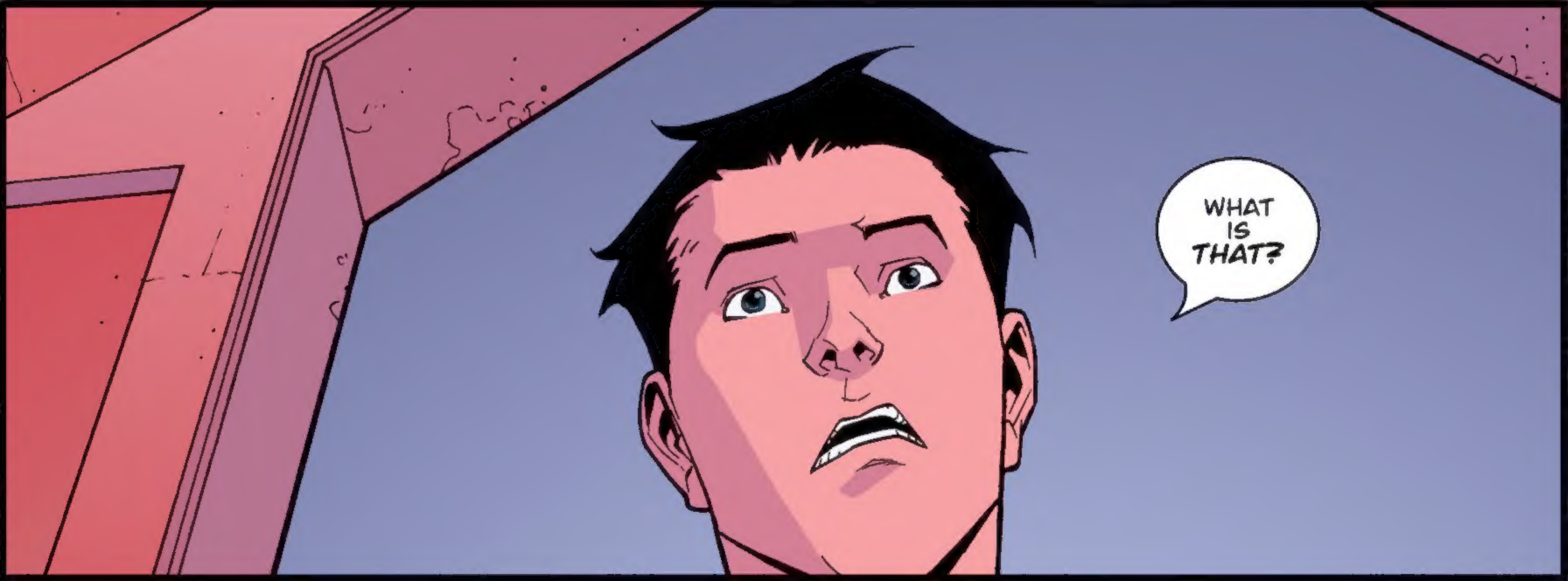
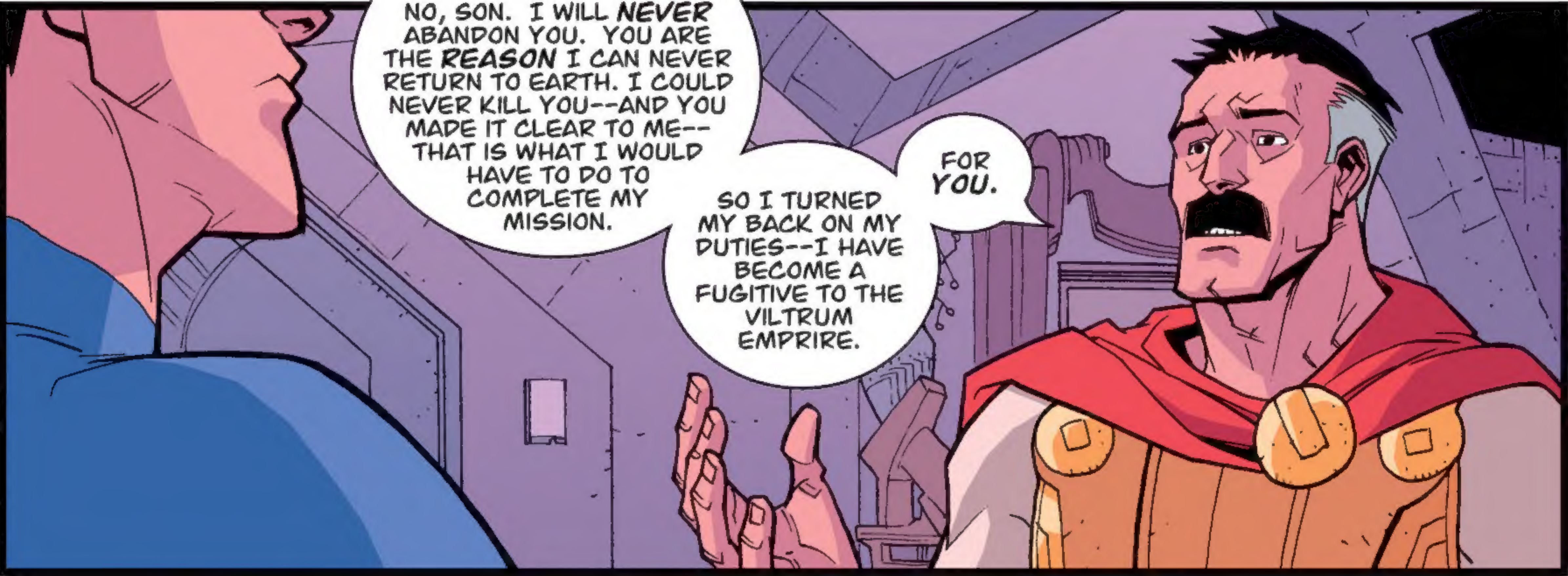
I SEE.













THAT...

...IS YOUR
LITTLE
BROTHER.

